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Identical letters dated 15 November 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

It has become clear to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic that the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) pay no attention when armed terrorist groups use chemical weapons against the Syrian people, even though they create all sorts of commotion when baseless allegations of such acts are levelled against the Syrian Government.

Armed terrorist groups such as the Nusrah Front and affiliated organizations that some States are fond of calling "the moderate opposition" have committed crimes involving the use of toxic agents, including chlorine gas, in several parts of the city of Aleppo.

The Syrian Government reported that on 13 November 2016, armed terrorist groups in eastern Aleppo fired mortar shells containing chlorine gas at the Nayrab area, causing 30 soldiers to suffer from asphyxiation, as well as causing injury to innocent civilians, including women and children. This is not the first time that terrorist organizations have fired shells containing toxic gas at residential neighbourhoods in Aleppo. Another such occasion was on 31 October 2016, when the Hamdaniyah neighbourhood and the Assad suburb were attacked with toxic gas, causing 48 cases of asphyxiation. Yet another such incident occurred on 3 October 2016, when terrorist organizations fired toxic chlorine gas at the Minyan area in western Aleppo, causing eight cases of asphyxiation. It should be noted that all those injured in these criminal acts were transported to hospitals in Aleppo for treatment, where examining physicians confirmed that the victims had inhaled toxic chlorine gas.

On Friday, 11 November 2016, the competent Russian agencies reported that that they had found incontrovertible proof, using laboratories recognized by OPCW, that shells fired by the armed terrorist groups had contained toxic gas, including chlorine.

The Syrian Arab Republic unequivocally condemns the use of chemical weapons by any party anywhere at any time. It reiterates that the toxic gas being used in Syria and Iraq, which terrorists from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front and other terrorist organizations could use anywhere in the world,

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reaches those terrorist groups via regimes and Governments that are well known, including the Governments of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. We have informed the United Nations and OPCW of that fact in numerous documents sent to those two organizations.

Once again, Syria calls on OPCW, as the competent international organization, to send its experts to Syria to investigate cases in which terrorist organizations have used toxic gas, in compliance with that organization's mandate and in accordance with the principles of transparency, impartiality and non-politicization. Concealing and distorting the facts, and continuing to adopt resolutions based on threats and coercion will not spare humankind the catastrophes that result from the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative